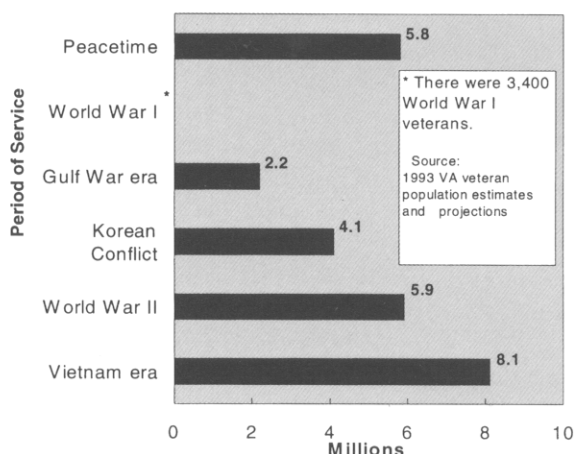


# WHO WE SERVE

## Our Continuous Focus On Our Nation's Veterans

Beginning with our Nation's struggle for freedom more than two centuries ago, approximately 42 million men and women have served their country during war time periods. Most (about 85 percent) served in one or more of the four

**Figure 1**  
**Veteran Population by Period of Service**  
**(As of July 1, 1999)**



**Table 1**  
**Projected Number\* of VA Programs Participants**

Program		FY 2001 Participants
Medical Care	Unique Patients	3,895,000
Compensation	Veterans	2,285,000
	Survivors/Children	302,000
Pension	Veterans	363,000
	Survivors	253,000
Education	Veterans/Servicepersons	309,000
	Reservists	71,000
	Survivors/Dependents	49,000
Vocational Rehabilitation	Veterans Receiving Services	55,000
Housing	Loans Guaranteed	250,000
Insurance	Administered Policies	2,047,000
	Supervised Policies (SGLI)	2,670,000
	Supervised Policies (VGLI)	388,000
Burial	Interments	88,000
	Graves Maintained	2,447,000
	Headstones/Markers Provided	349,000

\* Numbers are rounded to the nearest 1,000.

major conflicts of the 20th century, with World War II veterans representing nearly 40 percent of all American war participants. Today there are about 24.9 million veterans living in the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; 19 million of these veterans served during at least one wartime period. There are also approximately 45 million family members of living veterans and survivors of deceased veterans. Figure 1 shows the population size of veterans that VA serves by period of service. Table 1 shows the number of participants that VA projects to serve in our major program areas in FY 2001, and how we affect the lives of millions of veterans and their families.

## WHO WE ARE

**VA's mission is "To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan."**

These words, spoken by Abraham Lincoln during his second inaugural address, reflect the philosophy and principles that guide VA in everything we do. President Lincoln's proclamation has captured America's commitment to many generations of veterans, and it is an enduring symbol of our support for those who have served. Today, President Lincoln's statement reflects VA's inherent responsibility to serve America's veterans and their families with dignity and compassion and to be their principal advocate in ensuring that they receive medical care, benefits, social support, and lasting memorials promoting the health, welfare, and dignity of all veterans in recognition of their service to this Nation.

VA's total obligations for FY 2001 are projected to be \$54.3 billion. Of that amount, \$24.1 billion will be for compensation and pension benefits, \$6.4 billion for other benefits and programs, \$23.5 billion will be spent on medical care, and \$323 million on burial operations and associated benefits.

VA employs approximately 220,000 individuals (including full and part-time employees) and almost 98 percent of these employees provide direct services to veterans and their families in VA field operations. VA has facilities in all 50 states, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia. VA provides services and benefits through the following 10 major business lines:

- Compensation
- Medical Care
- Medical Research
- Medical Education
- Pension
- Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment
- Housing
- Insurance
- Burial

VA accomplishes delivery of veteran services through our 172 medical centers, 800 ambulatory care and community-based outpatient clinics, 206 veteran centers, 57 regional benefit offices, more than 24 military discharge centers, and 119 national cemeteries.